The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme is the world's largest community based child development prgramme which aims at holistic development of children (0-6 years) and pregnant & lactating mothers from disadvantaged sections by providing a package of services comprising of supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check-up, referral services, pre-school non-formal education and nutrition & health education. Currently, services under the Scheme are being provided to about 388 lakh beneficiaries, comprising of about 322 lakh children below 6 years and about 66 lakh pregnant & lactating mothers through a network of about 6 lakh Anganwadi Centres.

ICDS is a Centrally-sponsored Scheme, wherein the Central Government is responsible for programme planning & operating costs and the State Governments are responsible for implementation of the Scheme and for providing supplementary nutrition out of States
resources.

(c) and (d) It is not correct to say that 85 per cent of funds under the ICDS Scheme are spent on infrastructure and salaries of the employees and only 15 per cent of the amount reaches to the real beneficiaries. In the year 2001 -02, the latest year for which details of Central and States' expenditure are available, the expenditure on infrastructure and salary was about Rs. 1376 crore, whereas medicine kits, pre-school education kits and supplementary nutrition of the order of about Rs. 1910 crore were provided to the beneficiaries. In addition, Anganwadi Centres also provided health check-up & referral services, pre-school education and nutrition & health education to children and pregnant & lactating mothers, for which no value can be assessed in monetary terms.

Copying in IGNOU examination centre

†613. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:
SHRIMOTILALVORA:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the news-item captioned IGNOU Pariksha Kendra Per Khuleaam Nakal as appeared in the media recently;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government are aware of the fact that students were disqualified in the examination for non-functioning of computers due to failure of electricity in various centres allotted for conducting practical examination of MCA third years;

(d) whether it is also a fact that no action has been taken by IGNOU against the concerned centres; and

(e) if so, concrete steps taken by Government to rectify such situation and to save the future of students?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. VALLABHBHAI RAMJIBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) and (b) According to the information furnished by Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), the investigations carried out by the University have revealed that the news item appearing in Dainik Jagaran dated 12th June 2003 was baseless and fabricated.

(c) to (e) The University has informed that no such incident has come to their notice.

Spreading of mass literacy and education

614. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any new steps for spreading mass literacy and education to every nook and corner of the country;

(b) if so, whether this will help to ensure that learning becomes a continuous and life long process;

(c) whether Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has drawn any plan to launch a dedicated satellite for spreading knowledge in the country; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.